



Harriet Scott, del. et lith.

THE TASMANIAN TIGER.  
(*THYLACINUS CYNOCEPHALUS*.)

Sydney, N. S. W.—Thomas Richards, Government Printer.—1892.

From a photograph by Victor A. Froul.

# Dog-headed Thylacine, or Tasmanian Tiger.

(*Thylacinus cynocephalus.*)

THIS animal is the largest and most ferocious of the whole Mammalian Fauna in Australia, and at the present time restricted to the island of Tasmania. It inhabits the wild rocky mountain districts, and frequently visits the plain country to attack the sheep-folds. The flock-owners try everything in their power to exterminate this dangerous creature, and it has consequently become very rare in the more populous districts. The summits of the western mountains of Tasmania appear to be their stronghold. These inhospitable regions are about 3,500 feet high, and the climate is consequently very cold in winter-time. We have been informed that when the snow is on the ground the "Tiger" or "Hyæna" (as the Tasmanians call this animal) is easily trapped; a very powerful instrument is however necessary to retain them, and if they can reach the captured limb they are certain to gnaw it off. Mr. Masters, a careful observer, states that he has noticed the tracks of the Tiger after a fresh fall of snow, followed first by the not less ferocious Black Dasyure, by ordinary "Native Cats," and even by the smaller species such as *Antechinus swainsonii*, all going one after the other in expectation of joining the feast in their turn. Some of the shepherds state that one of these animals will kill hundreds of sheep in a very short time, and instances are on record of men having been attacked by them.

The number of young brought forth at a time does not exceed four; they are carried in a pouch, and when born are as small as young Kangaroos, but the well known marsupial bones with which all the other pouched animals are furnished are not found in the Thylacine. The animal is peculiar to Tasmania; but, as fossil remains prove, has once also existed on the mainland. There are two varieties which the shepherds have distinguished for years—one called the Bull-head the other the Grey-hound Tiger. The difference between them is a shorter head and closer packed and larger teeth in the first-mentioned species.

As it is not possible in the present work to illustrate all the members of the family to which the Thylacine belongs, we shall give a brief list of all the genera and species hitherto described, which will greatly assist the student in his labours.

## DASYURUS FAMILY—(FAMILY DASYURIDÆ.)

Marsupialia having the second and third toes of the hind feet disunited and well developed: the thumb or first toe small or absent; the tail non-prehensile and hairy; the canine teeth well developed, except in the small species of the genus *Antechinus*, and the molar teeth either with trenchant crowns or with the masticating surface presenting numerous prickly points.

The family is subdivided into the following groups or genera:—

### GENUS MYRMECOBIUS.

General habit and size like a squirrel; head flat and broad, muzzle slightly elongated, muffle, nose, and ears of moderate size and pointed, tongue long and slender, legs short and strong, toes, five in front and four to the hind feet, all bearing compressed curved nails, tail long and bushy; female provided with four mammæ but destitute of a pouch; teeth small and detached, incisors  $\frac{4-4}{3-3}$ , canines  $\frac{1-1}{1-1}$ , molars  $\frac{8-8}{9-9}$ , = 52 teeth.

#### BANDED MYRMECOBIUS (*Myrmecobius fasciatus*).

Fur harsh and adpressed, rusty red of various shades, more or less pencilled with white in front, but much darker on the hind part of the body; beneath dirty white; from seven to eleven white bands across the back, the interspace between them increasing as they approach the tail. A black mark or band runs from near the muzzle to the ear, enclosing the eye. The ears are small, narrow, and pointed; the tail is bushy; and has a flat appearance. There are many points in the anatomy of this singular animal wherein it resembles the Ant-eater (*Echidna hystrix*); these are—the long and narrow palate, the rounded brain-case, the strong limbs, elongate tongue, and weak mandible. The teeth are small, weak, and do not touch each other; in their number they are not exceeded by any living Mammal, and approach those of the extinct *Phascolotherium*,—one of the oldest of the Mammalian Fauna known to us. The two first lower incisors are curved and directed upwards, resembling the same teeth of some Phalangers. If there is a tendency on one hand to approach the form of the Ant-eaters, there is on the other some relationship with the Phalangers, and

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more so with the little Tarsipes: both animals have delicate heads with weak jaws, and the teeth standing far apart; both possess a long slender tongue, a harsh fur, and four mammæ, like all true Phalangiers. We have not been able to ascertain whether any marsupial bones are present; if so they are very small, as in a specimen under examination they could not be felt.

The statement made by some authors that the number of mammæ is eight, and that from five to nine young are produced in a litter, is erroneous. We have had an opportunity to examine several female specimens, every one of which had only four teats, generally all drawn, and proving the production of four young only.

The *Myrmecobius* is common on the West Coast and in the interior of New South Wales and South Australia: the Murrumbidgee River may be taken as its most eastern boundary. The food of this animal is said to consist of ants and their eggs; but it is probably augmented by honey and other vegetable substances, for the extraction of which from flowers or the hives of the wild bee it is well adapted.

#### GENUS PHASCOGALE.

Dasyuridæ, with the two foremost incisors of the upper and lower jaw larger than the others; premolars  $\frac{3-3}{3-3}$ , true molars  $\frac{4-4}{4-4}$ , studded with prickly tubercles; those of the upper jaw with triangular crowns; the last tooth very narrow and transverse. Five toes to each foot, the inner toe of the hind foot a nailless thumb. Tail long and bushy, mammæ eight, pouch absent.

##### BRUSH-TAILED PHASCOGALE (*Phascogale penicillata*).

Fur rather long and soft, grey, pencilled with white, beneath white; tail long, black, and bushy towards the tip, basal portion covered with short grey hairs.

Habitat—Australia generally, with the exception of the most southern parts of Tasmania.

This species was already known to the first settlers, and figured as far back as 1798, by White, in his Journal, under the name of *Tapoa tafa*. It appears however, that this name is frequently applied to other animals, such as "Native Cats" or Phalangiers. The Brush-tailed Phascogale is about the size of a Rat, arboreal and nocturnal in its habits, and a harmless creature, though authors (but not observers) differ on this point, and put the animal down as most ferocious and a terror to the hen-roost. It is expert in killing mice, but would certainly not attack a fowl. Like all other members of this group, it is in the habit of folding down the ears, which are very seldom carried erect.

##### HANDSOME-TAILED PHASCOGALE (*Phascogale calura*).

General colour ashy grey with a wash of brown, beneath whitish; tail covered at the base with short rust-coloured hairs, tip forming a brush of black hairs.

The habitat is given by authors as Western Australia; it occurs however also in New South Wales, near the Darling River.

#### GENUS ANTECHINUS.

General character of Genus *Phascogale*:—Tail short, without a brush at the tip; canines not very prominent, with a broad base; female with a shallow pouch containing from six to ten teats, and with as many young in a litter.

The greater number of species composing this group of insectivorous marsupials are small, and closely allied to each other, so that the classification based upon the colour and length of the fur cannot be depended on.

Our most prolific author enumerates fourteen species without describing the dentition of one, and after a careful examination of animals, the hair of which answered to his description, we have arrived at the conclusion that the following number can only be retained as specific examples:—

##### TASMANIAN ANTECHINUS (*Antechinus swainsonii*).

The largest of the genus, general colour dusky-brown or almost black. Specimens occur however which are more of a rust colour. Beneath more or less greyish white. Total length eleven inches.

Habitat—Tasmania.

FRECKLED ANTECHINUS (*Antechinus apicalis*).

General colour grey-brown, of a very rich brown hue on the hinder parts of the body; on the head and fore-parts of the body distinctly freckled with black and white; under-parts dirty yellow-white; fore-legs of a bright rust colour; hind-legs distinctly tinted externally with the same colour; tail clothed at the roots with hairs like those of the body, but with the hairs becoming gradually shorter towards the apex, where they are black. Total length, 9 to 10 inches.

Habitat—West Australia. Called "Dibbler" by the Aborigines of West Australia.

YELLOW-FOOTED ANTECHINUS (*Antechinus flavipes*).

General colour of upper parts grey, towards behind rusty-tinted; feet and under-parts of body of the same rust colour; tail much darker. Total length,  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

Habitat—Australia generally.

STUART'S ANTECHINUS (*Antechinus stuartii*).

Rather larger than the previous species, and of a more uniform colour; grey, with a wash of brown, probably a variety of *A. flavipes*.

SPOTTED ANTECHINUS (*Antechinus maculatus*).

This is a small species from New South Wales (Clarence River district); colouration dark blackish-brown above and slate-grey below, with a few white spots, and a similar spot on the throat. The following small species is probably a variety of it.

LITTLE ANTECHINUS (*Antechinus minutissimus*).

This is probably the smallest of the group; above greyish-brown, lighter beneath. Total length, perhaps 3 inches. We noticed a specimen in the Musuem collection, obtained by Mr. G. Masters, which had six good-sized young attached to the nipples. The mother was trailing them along the ground with some difficulty, when he bagged the whole family group. Though we have often stated a certain number of mammæ to be constant in certain species, this cannot be relied upon *always*. This specimen has six young, six drawn nipples, and an odd one on one side, distinct but not in milk.

The animals which we have had under consideration belong to what we have described in a former paper as the broad-footed section, and they number five in all; they are more or less arboreal in their habits, and their fur is only moderately soft.

We will now enumerate the members of the remaining section, which have been classed under the generic name of *Podabrus*.

## GENUS PODABRUS.

Comprising the silky-furred and slender-footed species, with more or less terrestrial habits.

The following animals possess a skin as delicate and soft as a mole, but of longer texture; the tail, often incrassated, is covered with short adpressed hair, unlike the *Antechini* proper, in which the hairs of the tail are always of unequal length, and very harsh to the touch.

WHITE-FOOTED ANTECHINUS (*Podabrus albipes*).

Three species appear to be enumerated of the white-footed silky-furred section; but the other two are no doubt identical with the above, though named otherwise and respectively *Antechinus leucopus* and *fuliginosus*. If, after careful investigation of their anatomy, we should come to the conclusion that they constituted three distinct species, the result will be made known, though it will not alter much our present arrangement. These little animals are by no means rare in less settled parts, and are caught in large numbers by the aborigines of the Murray and of King George's Sound. In the immediate neighbourhood of Sydney they have been found occasionally under stones during the winter-time, but never more than about two in three years by one collector. Their nocturnal habits and small size make it difficult for the best observer to obtain specimens.

The two remaining species, which are distinguished by a tail more or less incrassated, but appear otherwise identical with *P. albipes*, are named Thick-tailed Podabrus (*Podabrus crassicaudatus*), and Large-tailed Podabrus (*Podabrus*

*macrourus*): the first discovered by Mr. Gilbert, in West Australia; the last from the Darling Downs district, obtained by the same indefatigable naturalist, to whom Mr. Gould is indebted for his choicest specimens. It is necessary to state that the figures which we see of these animals are not quite correct, the tail being always exaggerated.

MITCHELL'S PODABRUS (*Podabrus mitchellii*).

This species is by far the largest of the small *Dasyuridae* with thick woolly fur. A single mutilated specimen, with a note attached intimating that it was obtained by Sir Thomas Mitchell, was found in the Museum some years ago, and may be described as follows:—Fur thick and silky, resembling the fur of *Phascogale lanigera* of Gould; general colour, slate grey with a wash of brown, beneath white; ears rather long; feet white; total length eleven inches: the tail being about five and a half inches, and probably furnished with a tuft of hair. The large tarsi and long tibia indicate that the animal moved by a succession of jumps; the specimen is, however, too much mutilated to enable us to judge about this characteristic with certainty.

Habitat—The interior of New South Wales.

GENUS ANTECHINOMYS.

Terrestrial *Dasyuridae*, with long Kangaroo-like hind-legs, and four toes, the thumb being absent; tarsi covered with hair, the toes only being naked. Dentition like *Podabrus*, with canines still less developed.

The genus comprises only one species,—the animal described by Mr. Gould as *Phascogale lanigera*.

WOOLLY ANTECHINOMYS (*Antechinomys lanigera*).

Fur long and silky, general colour greyish-brown, beneath white; tail as long as the body, with a tuft of moderately long fine hairs; progressing by a succession of jumps. The female has no pouch, and is provided with eight mammæ.

Habitat—The interior of New South Wales and Victoria.

GENUS CHÆTOCERCUS.

Head short, broad behind, almost triangular; auditory bulla very large; upper canines strong and elongate, not so broad at their base as in the genus *Phascogale*; incisors long and narrow, resembling those of *Dasyurus*, first pair directed forward, and slightly larger than the others; pre-molars, three in the upper jaw, the middle one largest, the first somewhat smaller, and the third and last very diminutive and tubercular; molars of the usual triangular form, with rather blunt tubercles, increasing in size from the first to the third, the fourth being narrow, transverse, and resembling the same tooth in the genus *Dasyurus*. The lower jaw is short and strong, and the articulating condyle is placed still higher comparatively than in any other species of this group; the incisors are three in number, the first pair being the largest; canines smaller than those of the upper jaw, sharp and pointed, and devoid of the broad base common to other small *Dasyures*. Of pre-molars the lower jaw contains only two, the first larger than the second. There are four molars, the first and last being the smallest, the two middle ones of about equal size; on the first the anterior tubercle is scarcely indicated, showing, with the absent third pre-molar, a close approach to the genus *Dasyurus*. Tail thick, with compressed sides, ornamented by a crest of hair on the apical half, similar to the tail of the Pig-footed Bandicoot (*Chaeropus castanotis*).

CRESTED CÆTOCERCUS (*Chaetocercus cristicauda*).

General structure similar to that of *Phascogale calura*; limbs strong, furnished with long claws; five toes to the fore and hind feet, the inner toe of the latter a short nailless thumb, the hair covering the fore-feet long and shaggy; colouration rusty-brown, the fur being of a dark leaden-grey at the base. Total length 8 inches, tail  $3\frac{1}{4}$ , head to base of ear 1, tarsi and toes  $1\frac{1}{8}$  inches.

Habitat—South Australia, probably the neighbourhood of Lake Alexandrina.

## GENUS DASYURUS.

Flesh-eating animals, of moderate size, with spotted or striped fur; they resemble the Martins and Polecats of the placental order *Carnivora*, and are best known to the Colonists as Native Cats, or Tiger Cats,—the larger Tasmanian species as “Devils,” Tigers, and Hyænas; they have, however, no relation to the Cat tribe, and are Marsupial animals, with a shallow pouch or skin-fold. The teeth of the *Dasyuri* resemble those of the smaller *Phascogales* and *Antechini*, but the pre-molars reduced by one in each ramus. The *Thylacinus* is, however, an exception, and has three pre-molars in each ramus. The dental formula stands therefore (*Thylacinus* excepted):—Incisors  $\frac{4-4}{3-3}$ , canines  $\frac{1-1}{1-1}$ , pre-molars  $\frac{2-2}{2-2}$ , molars  $\frac{4-4}{4-4}$  = 42 teeth.

VIVERRINE DASYURUS (*Dasyurus viverrinus*).

Fur rather long and soft; tail bushy; ears long, generally carried folded down. General colour black spotted with white, or yellowish spotted with white; under parts of body lighter. No inner toe or thumb to the hind-foot. Female with six mammæ, and generally four young at a litter. Total length 23 to 24 inches, of which the tail measures 8 or  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

Habitat—Southern Australia and Tasmania. We do not think that this Dasyure inhabits the West Coast.

NORTH AUSTRALIAN DASYURE (*Dasyurus hallucatus*).

Fur of moderate length, and rather harsh; general colour of the upper parts of the body dusky brown, much pencilled with yellowish, and having numerous irregular white spots; under-parts white suffused with yellow; tail but little bushy, cylindrical, the apical half or more, black.

The above is Mr. Waterhouse's description of a British Museum specimen, who also states that the animal is less in size than either the Common or Geoffroy's Dasyure. The hind-foot is provided with a thumb. Nothing is stated about skull or skeleton, and though we enumerate the species as distinct for the present, it will be seen when the description of *Dasyurus geoffroyi* is compared with it that both animals are identical. The habitat is given as North Australia, Port Essington.

GEOFFROY'S DASYURUS (*Dasyurus geoffroyi*).

Fur moderate, general colour of the upper parts yellowish pencilled with black, and having numerous irregular white spots; body beneath white; tail immaculate, black at the apex; hind-foot with a thumb.

Habitat—West Australia, South Australia, and New South Wales.

The fine series of Dasyures in the Australian Museum enables us to state without doubt that both species, *Dasyurus hallucatus* and *Dasyurus geoffroyi*, are varieties of each other. The Museum is in possession of specimens which answer to both descriptions—specimens in which the yellow and some in which the darker tint predominates. There is one example with a very bushy tail and scarcely any black hair at the apex, and there are others with a cylindrical tail, which is tipped with black. Colouration is of very little value in the determination of species, and as we have compared the skulls of these various coloured animals, we can only state that they differ in nothing material except size. The largest specimens occur on the Murray River, those from other parts of South Australia are much smaller and darker in colour, but now and then examples are found which are pale yellowish.

The name of *Dasyurus geoffroyi* should therefore be adopted for both animals. On the east coast this Dasyure has not yet been noticed.

SPOTTED-TAILED DASYURUS (*Dasyurus maculatus*).

Fur rather harsh and short; general colour from deep brown to light reddish brown pencilled with yellowish; body beneath sandy-coloured, the whole, including the tail, spotted with white; a thumb to the hind-foot.

The present animal differs as much in size and colour as did the last-mentioned species, and its geographical distribution is as extensive. Tasmania, Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia, have accorded it as inhabiting these Colonies. We have also seen examples from Queensland. It is peculiar to the Coast Districts, but has not yet been observed in the far North or on the West Coast. The spotted-tailed Dasyure grows to a large size, and is provided with most formidable teeth. Mr. Waterhouse, the able naturalist, who has written a most valuable work on the Marsupialia, mentions a skull as that of an aged individual 3 inches  $6\frac{1}{2}$  lines long; but a specimen in the Australian Museum measures fully  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches, and the upper canines are  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches in length. Specimens have been observed as large as a common Fox; and as these animals are not only very ferocious but also exceedingly stubborn, it frequently happens that they make great havoc if they gain admission to the poultry-yard of the settler.

## GENUS SARCOPHILUS.

*Dasyuri* with a short and stout body, short and broad head, and powerful compact teeth, which are packed so close together that there is not a line of space between them; legs rather long, tail short and thick.

URSINE SARCOPHILUS OR TASMANIAN BLACK DASYURE (*Sarcophilus ursinus*).

Fur coarse, of moderate length, and black, here and there with a white spot or two; these spots occur most frequently on the breast or loins.

Mr. Waterhouse gives the measurement of a skull as 4 inches 6 lines, another in the Australian Museum collection measures 6 inches, and is  $4\frac{3}{4}$  inches wide. The ferocity of these animals is almost beyond belief; they attack every living thing, and are most destructive to sheep, though not larger than a common Terrier Dog.

One of them, and by no means a large one, escaped not long ago, and killed in two nights fifty-four fowls, six geese, an albatross,\* and a cat. Having been recaptured in what was considered a stout trap, with a door constructed of iron bars as thick as a lead-pencil, he made his escape by twisting this solid obstacle aside, almost doubling it up with his powerful teeth. To give some idea of the strength of the animal, we mention that the blacksmith who repaired the trap could not bend the bars back into their position without proper tools. When caught in a fox-trap the black Dasyure often bites off the fastened limb and escapes. A specimen in the Museum Collection, the largest ever secured, had only three legs; one of the hind limbs was clean gone, and not even the trace of a stump remained visible. The fossil *Sarcophilus lanianus* of the Wellington Caves was a still more powerful animal. Numerous bones and teeth prove the existence of large numbers of these creatures during post-pleiocene times, which must have made havoc among the more peaceful animal tribes. There can be no doubt that they were a terror even to some of the gigantic creatures, whose young they probably devoured whenever any opportunity offered.

We have noticed before the total absence of large fossil *Carnivores*, which were supposed to be necessary to check the undue increase of the herbivorous marsupials; but with such strong and blood-thirsty creatures as this small *Dasyure*, no great *Carnivores* were required to carry out the designs of the Creator.

The habitat of this animal is restricted to the island of Tasmania.

## GENUS THYLACINUS.

*Dasyuridæ*, with the outermost incisors exceeding the others in size; the three foremost of the upper true molars with a much-elevated central cusp, an anterior and posterior cusp but little elevated, and an internal lobe; the hindermost of the upper true molars transverse; the true molars of the lower jaw nearly resembling those of the upper jaw, but destitute of internal lobe, and with the central cusp more elevated; the humerus with the inner condyle perforated; the hind-foot destitute of an inner toe; a well-developed pouch with four mammæ, but without marsupial bones. The pre-molars resemble those of the genus *Phascogale*, and are three in number in each ramus.

DOG-HEADED THYLACINE, OR TASMANIAN TIGER (*Thylacinus cynocephalus*).

About equal in size to the common Wolf; tail about half the length of the body; fur short, and closely applied to the skin; general colour grey-brown; the back with about twelve to fourteen transverse black bands, narrow and short on the fore-parts of the back, longer and broader on the hinder-parts; region of the eye pale; tail with short fur, nearly like that of the body, excepting on the under-side of the apical portion and at the tip, where the hairs are comparatively long. The *Thylacine* stands lower on the legs than either Wolf or Dog, and in every respect resembles the smaller *Dasyures*; like the *Sarcophilus* it is a most ferocious and formidable animal, which will soon overpower even a Cow or Horse if driven by hunger to attack them; it is also stated that the creature is not afraid of man, and will show a formidable front when driven to extremities.

We know one large fossil species, which was the largest Marsupial *Carnivore* on record, and inhabited the mainland of Australia in former ages; at the present time the *Thylacine* is restricted to Tasmania.

SHORT-HEADED THYLACINE (*Thylacinus breviceps*).

This species has been founded on two skulls obtained by Mr. Masters on the Ouse River in Tasmania. The skulls are those of young animals, and show the distinguishing characteristics well. The head is shorter, the pre-molars

\* The albatross was a pet bird, which had lived in the Museum ground for months.

much closer together, and, like all the other teeth, larger than in the common *Thylacine*; this is best seen when we compare a full-grown *Thylacinus cynocephalus* skull, with one of the *Thylacinus breviceps*, which, as regards size and position of the teeth, gives the following result:—

A large skull of the common Thylacine measures, from the occipital foramen (the opening at the back of the head) to the incisor teeth, exactly 9 inches. The width of the palate in front of the last premolar measures slightly more than 1 inch. The palatal opening is  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches in length, and a little more than  $\frac{1}{8}$ th of an inch wide, and the median line of the palate is imperfectly ankylosed. The last molar but one—the largest of the series—is  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch wide in its broadest part, and the space between the two first pre-molars measures  $\frac{1}{2}$  an inch in width.

A skull of the Short-headed Thylacine measures, as above,  $6\frac{1}{2}$  inches in length, and is therefore that of a much younger animal, and yet the palatal opening is reduced in size, forms two small holes less than 1 inch in length, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an inch wide, and the median suture is completely closed up. The width of the palate in front of the third pre-molars is as large as in the adult *T. cynocephalus*, and the largest molar exceeds in size by  $\frac{1}{8}$ th of an inch that of the greater specimen. The space between the pre-molar teeth is less than  $\frac{1}{8}$ th of an inch, but in the larger one it is double that width,—which shows that the teeth of *T. breviceps* are much closer packed. Comparing the skull of a younger *T. cynocephalus* with that of *T. breviceps*, all the differences in the size of the teeth become more striking, and other diverging points could be mentioned were further proofs required of the correctness of these observations. Professor Owen at once acknowledged the truth of this statement, and accepted the *T. breviceps* as a distinct species, but our Tasmanian friends continue to consider the two animals as varieties only.

The foregoing discussion will prove the value of Comparative Anatomy when determining species, and also the advantage of having many specimens for examination. Kind donors to the Museum must not apprehend that their most liberal presents will ever overstock the collection, because the larger the number of skulls or skeletons the better will the animals of this Country be understood by future generations. It is exactly with Comparative Anatomy as with the science of Meteorology: had the changes in the atmosphere been as carefully noted a hundred years ago as at the present time, great results could be deduced therefrom. Let us therefore advise our friends to gather their specimens in time, or it may come to pass when the last Thylacine dies, that the scientific men across Bass's Straits will contest as fiercely for its body as they did for that of the last aboriginal man not long ago. A similar want of forethought occurred in New Zealand, where a great trade with smoked human heads at one time existed. The British Government soon stopped the abominable traffic, and Dr. J. Haast, F.R.S., the well known Geologist, and Director of the Christ Church Museum, is now offering fabulous exchanges (a complete Moa we believe), for such a trophy whereof not one is to be found in New Zealand—the Australian Museum possessing two of them. The products of a new country should be secured as early as possible, and every object bearing upon the manners and habits, the arts and manufactures of a primitive race, should be gathered and deposited in some public Institution before it is too late. Animals and plants are often very local in their habitat, and soon disappear before the steps of civilization; as an example, we may mention the beautiful Nestor-Parrot of Phillip Island, which has long ceased to exist there. The island is a dependency of this Colony, but only one very bad specimen of this rare bird remains now in our collection.